

SAINT EPHREM

(Deacon and Doctor of the Church)

9 June



About Saint Ephrem (306–373)

Saint Ephrem served as head of a cathedral school in Syria. When the Persians invaded his hometown of Nisibis, he fled to a cave near Edessa (known as Urfa today) to live the rest of his life as a monk. Edessa is located in south-east Turkey, once part of upper Mesopotamia on the frontier of the Syrian desert. While living an austere life that was marked by isolation and fasting, he wrote hundreds of hymns and commentaries on Sacred Scripture. His hymns and Scriptural commentaries provide a deep insight into the Paschal Mystery of Christ and also opposed the gnostic tendencies that pervaded during his lifetime. From time to time he would leave his cave to preach in Edessa. He drew in crowds of people by his eloquent preaching and therefore became known as “the harp of the Holy Spirit.”

His preaching and hymns have spread far beyond the Syriac Church and are used in both the Eastern and Western Church alike.

Later in his life he was ordained a deacon and helped the people of Edessa to deal with a severe famine.

Bibliography

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<https://www.worldhistory.org/edessa/>

What can we learn from Saint Ephrem?

Saint Ephrem devoted his whole life to preaching and explaining Scripture, addressing the heresies that arose in his time. Not all of us are called to live a life of isolation, but Saint Ephrem does illustrate to us the importance of silence in our lives. In this day and age where people are running from one activity to another with a million thought processes going through their mind, we need to spend some each day in silence and stillness. Firstly, to allow us to process things, secondly, to be calm and thirdly, to allow us the opportunity to think about new things.

Saint Ephrem used his gifts and talents and we are called to do so as well. After becoming a Deacon, he helped the people of his town survive a famine. Deacons are ordained for service and Saint Ephrem certainly lived out that call. We too, are called to serve people in their time of need and to provide reassurance to people when they are anxious.

Prayer Resources

COLLECT

Pour into our hearts O Lord, we pray, the Holy Spirit,
at whose prompting the Deacon Saint Ephrem
exulted in singing of your mysteries
and from whom he received the strength
to serve you alone.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

GOSPEL

Luke 6:43-45

What a person says, comes from what is in the heart.

Jesus said to his disciples:

‘There is no sound tree that produces rotten fruit,
nor again a rotten tree that produces sound fruit.

For every tree can be told by its own fruit:

people do not pick figs from thorns,
nor gather grapes from brambles.

A good man draws what is good from the store of goodness in his heart;
a bad man draws what is bad from the store of badness.

For a man’s words flow out of what fills his heart.’

Communion Antiphon

cf. Lk 12:42

Behold a faithful and prudent steward
to give them their allowance of food at the proper time.

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Hymn for the Memorial of Saint Ephrem

1. Saint Ephrem lived an austere life
in which he preached God's holy word,
explaining what the Scriptures mean,
that people's hearts for God be stirred.

2. Writing hymns of great eloquence,
helping God's people sing His praise:
"The harp of the Holy Spirit"
became his honour all his days.

3. His preaching and his writing did
address heresies of his day,
that people came to know the truth
and followed Christ, the only Way.

4. Later a Deacon he became,
serving the people in his care,
helping them when a famine came,
lifting them up from their despair.

5. By the way which we live our lives
may people come to know the Lord;
following Him with greatest joy
that their lives with Him e'er accord.

Text: Chris deSilva and Alessio Loiacono
Tune: OLD 100TH LM 88.88

Saint Ephrem

(9 June)

Chris deSilva and Alessio Loiacono

OLD 100TH LM 88.88

Voice

1. Saint Eph - rem lived an aus - tere life in
2. Writ - ing hymns of great el - o - quence, help -
3. His preach - ing and his writ - ing did ad -
4. Lat - er a Dea - con he be - came, serv -
5. By the way which we live our lives may

Organ

4

Voice

1. which he preached God's ho - ly word, ex -
2. ing God's peo - ple sing His praise: "The
3. dress her - e - sies of his day, that
4. ing the peo - ple in his care, help -
5. peo - ple come to know the Lord; fol -

Org.

7

Voice

1. plain - ing what the Scrip - tures mean, that
 2. harp of the Ho - ly Spi - rit" be -
 3. peo - ple came to know the truth and
 4. ing them when a fam - ine came, lift -
 5. low - ing Him with great - est joy that

Org.

10

Voice

1. peo - ple's hearts for God be stirred.
 2. came his hon - our all his days.
 3. fol - lowed Christ, the on - ly Way.
 4. ing them up from their des - pair.
 5. their lives with Him e'er ac - cord.

Org.